

# GRECO-ROMAN PHILOSOPHY



2.1.2. The core ideas in Greco-Roman philosophy and science emphasized logic, empirical observation, and the nature of political power and hierarchy.

## PRE-SOCRATICS ANAXIMANDER

611 BCE-546 BCE

\*First philosopher to write down his ideas.

“Anaximander of Miletus considered that from warmed up water and earth emerged either fish or entirely fishlike animals. Inside these animals, men took form and embryos were held prisoners until puberty; only then, after these animals burst open, could men and women come out, now able to feed themselves”

1. Where does ANAXIMANDER say humans come from?
2. What theory is this similar to today?



## POST-SOCRATICS ZENO

334 BCE-262 BCE

\*Founder of the School of **STOICISM**

“In the life of an individual man, virtue is the sole good; such things as health, happiness, possessions, are of no account. Since virtue resides in the will, everything really good or bad in a man’s life depends only upon himself. Therefore every man has perfect freedom, provided he emancipates himself from mundane desires.”

6. What other world belief system does this mirror?
7. Briefly describe STOICISM.



## SOCRATICS



### PLATO

428 BCE -348 BCE

\*Student of **SOCRATES**

“Behold! human beings living in a underground den, which has a mouth open towards the light and reaching all along the den; here they have been from their childhood, and have their legs and necks chained so that they cannot move, and can only see before them, being prevented by the chains from turning round their heads. Above and behind them a fire is blazing at a distance, and between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised way; and you will see, if you look, a low wall built along the way, like the screen which marionette players have in front of them, over which they show the puppets.

And if they were able to converse with one another, would they not suppose that they were naming what was actually before them?

3. What is the only thing these prisoners have ever seen before them?
4. What might happen if one of them left the Cave and went out into the real world?



### ARISTOTLE

384 BCE -322 BCE

\*Student of **PLATO** &  
Teacher of **ALEXANDER**

“We suppose ourselves to possess unqualified scientific knowledge of a thing, as opposed to knowing it in the accidental way, when we think that we know the cause on which the fact depends, as the cause of that fact and of no other, and, further, that the fact could not be other than it is.

What I now assert is that at all events we do know by demonstration. By demonstration I mean [the logical reasoning] productive of scientific knowledge, a [logical reasoning], that is, the grasp of such knowledge. Assuming then that my thesis as to the nature of scientific knowing is correct, the premises of demonstrated knowledge must be true, primary, immediate, better known than and prior to the conclusion, which is further related to them as effect to cause. Unless these conditions are satisfied, the basic truths will not be ‘appropriate’ to the conclusion.

5. Aristotle is the first to write on this topic (that was later mastered by Islamic thinkers) what is he describing?

GREEK PHILOSOPHY

HEDONISM

EPICUREANISM

DAOISM

BUDDHISM

CONFUCIANISM

JAINISM

HERMITS

ASCETICISM

DESIRES



FREEMAN-PEDIA

STOICISM

MONASTICISM

DISCIPLINE



## CICERO

106 BCE-43 BCE

"Therefore, as the farmer knows agriculture and the scribe knows penmanship, and both seek in their respective sciences, not mere amusement only, but practical utility; so our statesmen should be familiar with government and legislation, even in their profoundest principles. But he should not embarrass himself in debating, arguing, lecturing, and scribbling. He should rather employ himself in the actual administration of the government, as a skillful superintendent, and become a farmer of the revenue, so as to make the state as flourishing as possible by a wholesome political economy"

8. What does Cicero say the statesmen should focus on?

9. What does he warn the statesmen to stay away from?

## WORDS TO LIVE BY...

*Meditations from your friendly neighborhood Emperor*

*Read the following from Marcus Aurelius' Meditations. Rank the words of advice from the last of the 5 Good Emperors.*

\_\_\_\_\_ Do not act as if you were going to live ten thousand years. Death hangs over you. While you live, while it is in your power, be good.

\_\_\_\_\_ You are a little soul carrying about a corpse

\_\_\_\_\_ Be like the cliff against which the waves continually break, but which stands firm and tames the fury of the water around it.

\_\_\_\_\_ Soon you'll be ashes or bones. A mere name at most—and even that is just a sound, an echo. The things we want in life are empty, stale, trivial.

\_\_\_\_\_ The best way of avenging yourself is not to become like the wrongdoer.

\_\_\_\_\_ Every moment think steadily as a Roman and a man to do what you have at hand with perfect and simple dignity, and feeling of humanity, freedom, and justice; free your mind from all other thoughts.

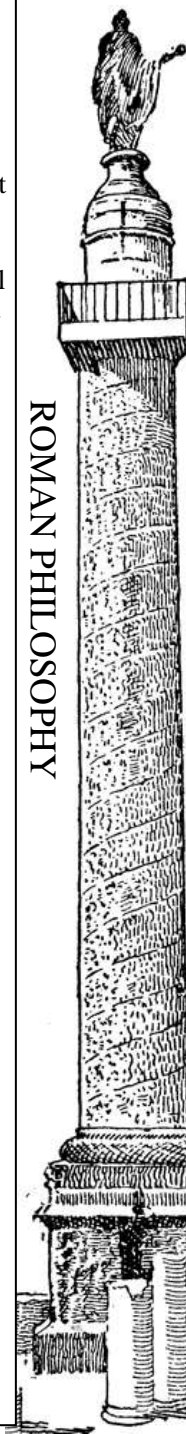
\_\_\_\_\_ Not to feel exasperated or defeated or despondent because your days aren't packed with wise and moral actions. But to get back up when you fail, to celebrate behaving like a human—however imperfectly—and fully embrace the pursuit you've embarked on.

*Sincerely,*

**MARCUS AURELIUS**

121 CE-180 CE

ROMAN PHILOSOPHY



Since this is a history course...



## HERODOTUS / THUCYDIDES

484 BCE -425 BCE

The Greek writer

Herodotus is considered the world's first historian, "the father of history."

Herodotus explored centuries of contacts between the ancient Greeks and the Persian Empire, culminating in the Persian Wars of the early fifth century B.C.

In dramatic land and sea battles, the Greeks managed to repel invaders from the much larger, richer, and more powerful Persian Empire to the east. Later historians have said these Greek victories saved Western Civilization.

To compile his history, Herodotus relied on oral accounts and he included gossip, myths, and rumors. Sometimes he would provide conflicting accounts of events and invite the reader to decide which to believe.

Herodotus wrote, "No one is so foolish as to prefer war to peace: in peace children bury their fathers, while in war fathers bury their children."

460 BCE -395 BCE

The Greek writer

Thucydides (thoo-SID-uh-dees) is credited with writing the first "scientific" history.

Gods and legends played no role in his history of the Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta, which took place in the late fifth century B.C. After 27 years of conflict, Sparta won and Athens went into decline.

Thucydides wrote only about events that occurred during his lifetime that he could verify through examination of written records and eyewitness accounts. He strived for complete objectivity, and in this way he pioneered the historical method used by historians today.



**FREEMAN-PEDIA**